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LET'S READ TOGETHER

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

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Stories · Games · Colouring

Hello, everybody!

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Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to .....

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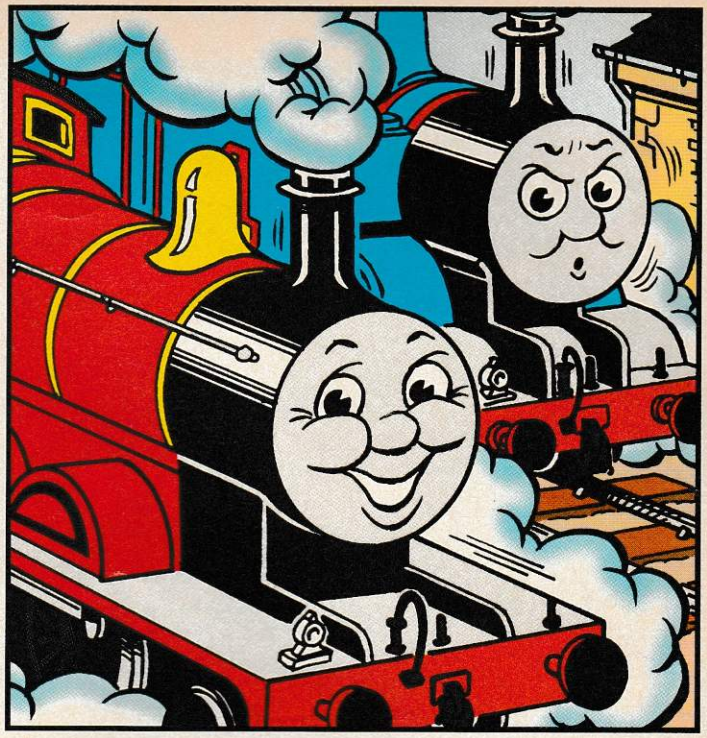
Star Story!

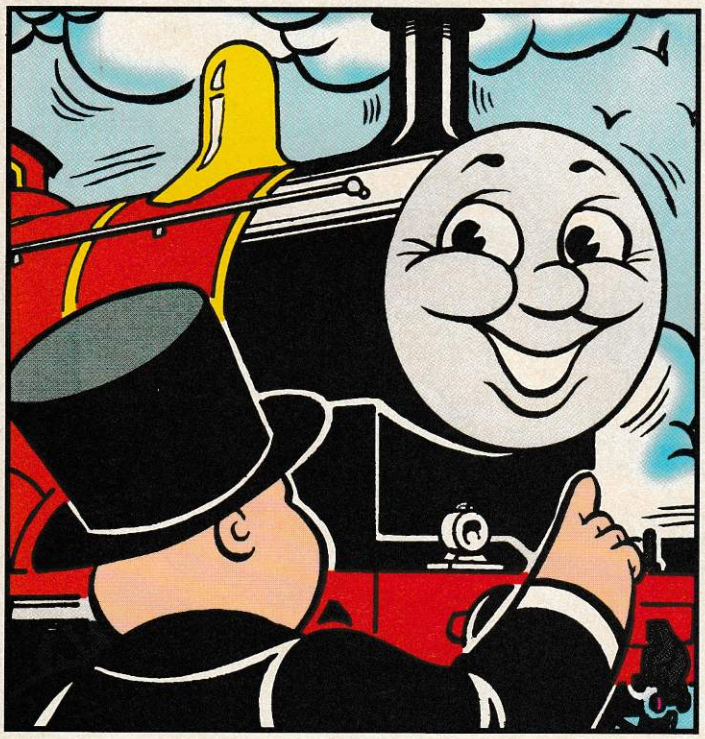
1. There was a very exciting rumour going about the Island of Sodor. "A famous film star's supposed to be visiting. I wonder if it's true?" said Oliver. "I hope so!" Mavis replied.

2. The engines could hardly wait to find out. "Imagine carrying such an important passenger," dreamed Daisy. "Well, I'm the smartest engine for the job!" said James, smugly.

3. "Hmm, don't be so sure the Fat Controller will choose you to carry the film star, James," smiled Thomas. "He might ask a Really Useful little tank engine, like me!"

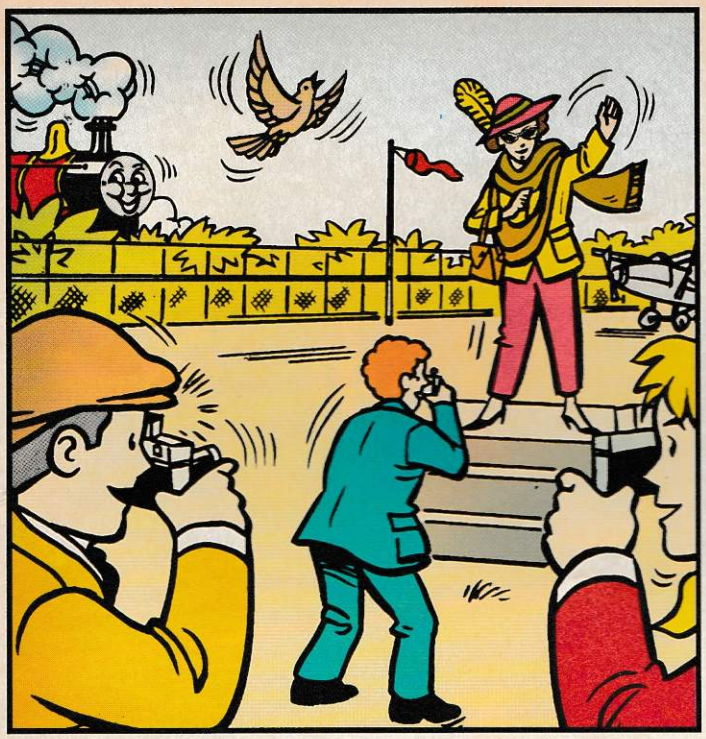


4. "Ha, the nearest you'll get to a film star is an autograph!" laughed James, rolling out of the station yard. "Cheek!" steamed Thomas. "He's much too big for his buffers!"

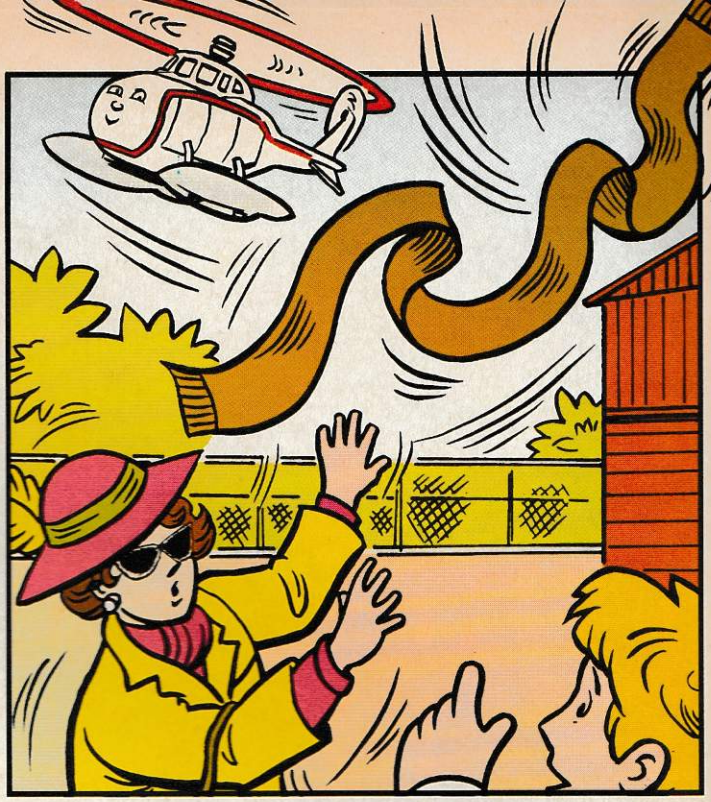


5. However, it seemed James was right. A film star was about to arrive and the Fat Controller asked him to fetch her from the airfield. "She'll be flying in this afternoon," he said.

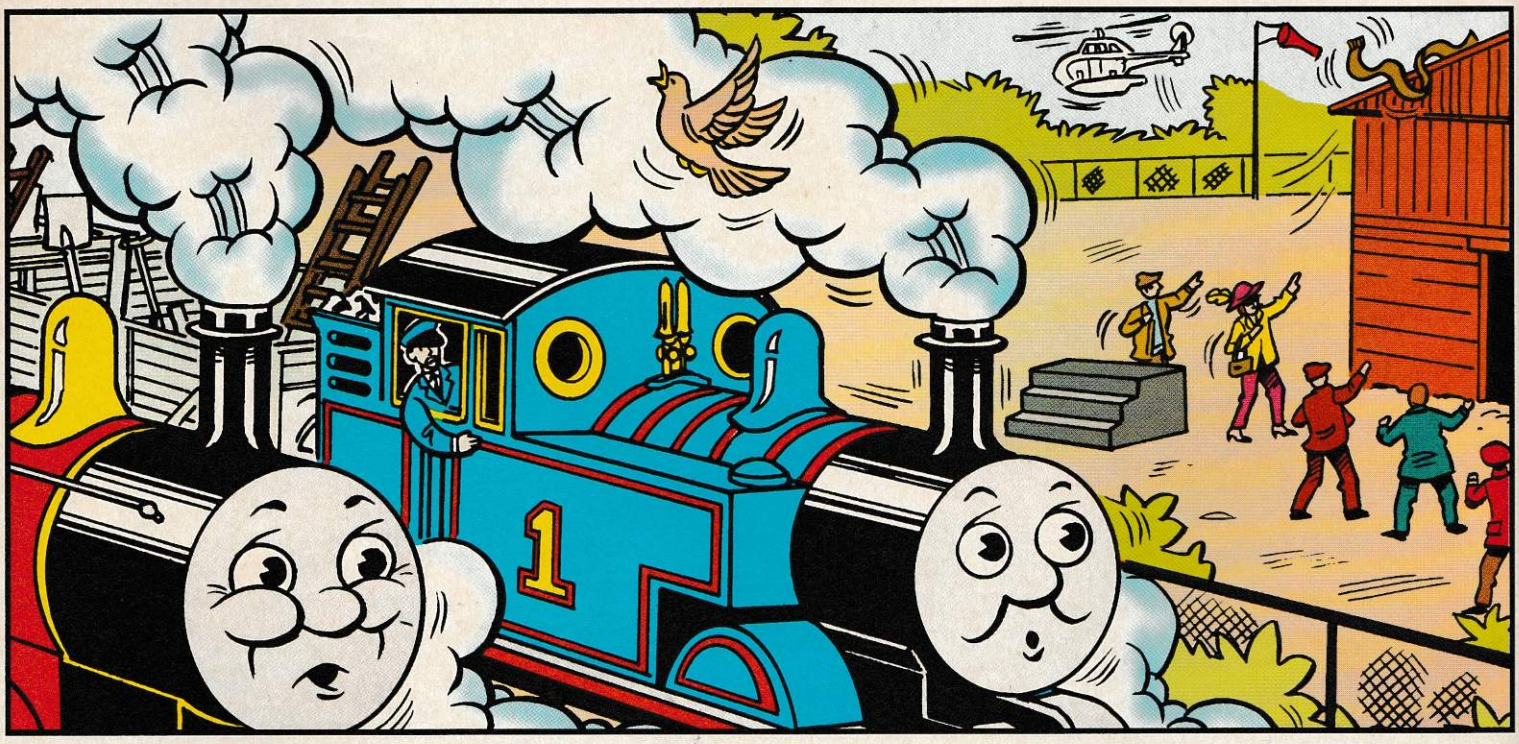
6. "Couldn't I go instead?" huffed Thomas. "I've got a very important job for you," said the Fat Controller. "You're to collect some supplies and take them to a new building site."



7. “Have fun, Thomas!” James called, before setting off. He reached the airfield station just as the aeroplane landed. The film star stepped out and the waiting crowd cheered.

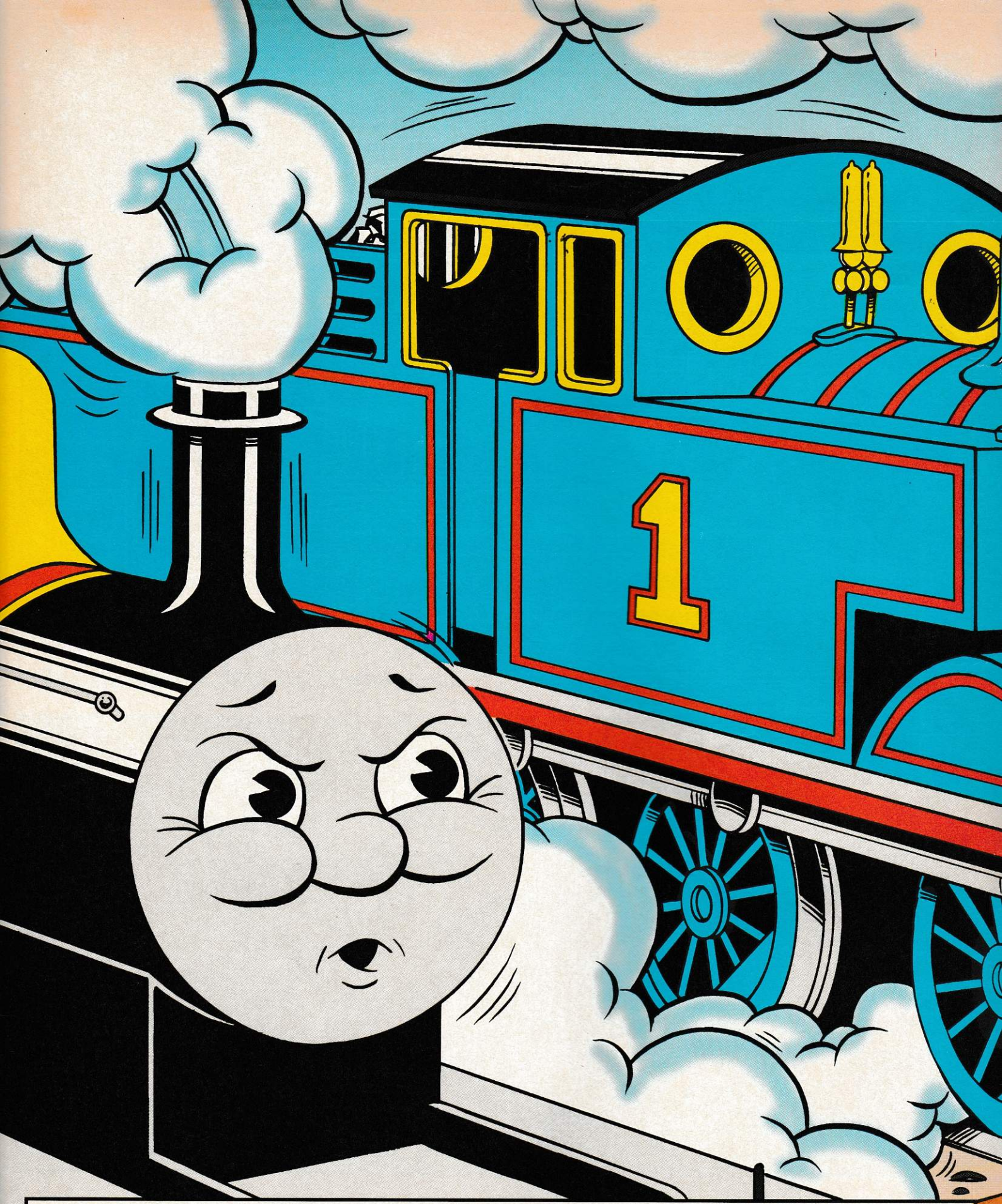


8. There were lots of newspaper photographers there, too. Just then, Harold flew overhead. His big, whirly blades blew the film star’s long, silk, scarf onto a nearby roof.



9. “Oh dear, someone please get it back for me!” cried the film star. But no one could reach her scarf. Harold was very sorry. At that moment, Thomas pulled up beside James.

10. There was a cement mixer, a ladder, sand and lots more in his trucks. “What’s going on?” he asked. James explained. Clever Thomas had an idea and called to his driver.



11. Thomas' crew unloaded the ladder. They leant it up against the roof and his driver climbed to the top. Now he could easily reach the scarf. The film star was pleased.

12. "We've Thomas to thank," said the driver. "Who's Thomas?" asked the film star. "My little tank engine," replied the driver, pointing. The lady walked straight over to Thomas.

13. She hurried past James without even a glance! "What a sweet little engine he is!" said the film star. How Thomas blushed. His cheeks went as red as James' paintwork!

14. Next day, a big photograph of Thomas and the film star appeared in the newspaper. "You've got your own famous star now!" he told the other engines, proudly.

Spot the c

These two pages look the same, but there are
spot the 5 changes? When you have

nas' porthole - Lady Hatt's hat - The word 'NEW'

liffference!

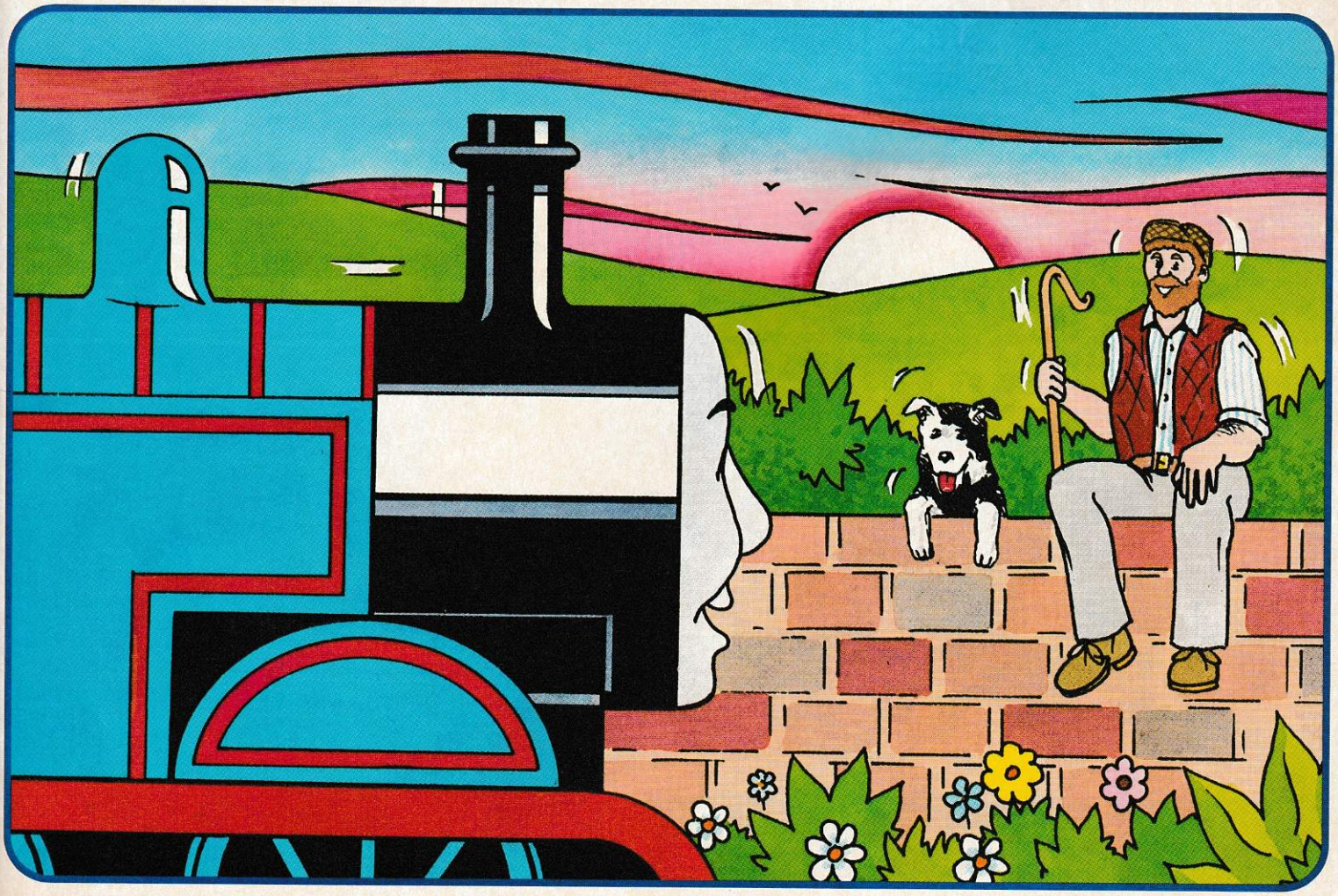
some tiny differences between them! Can you found them all, colour in the pictures!

Answers: Thomas' number - Thomas' buffer - Th

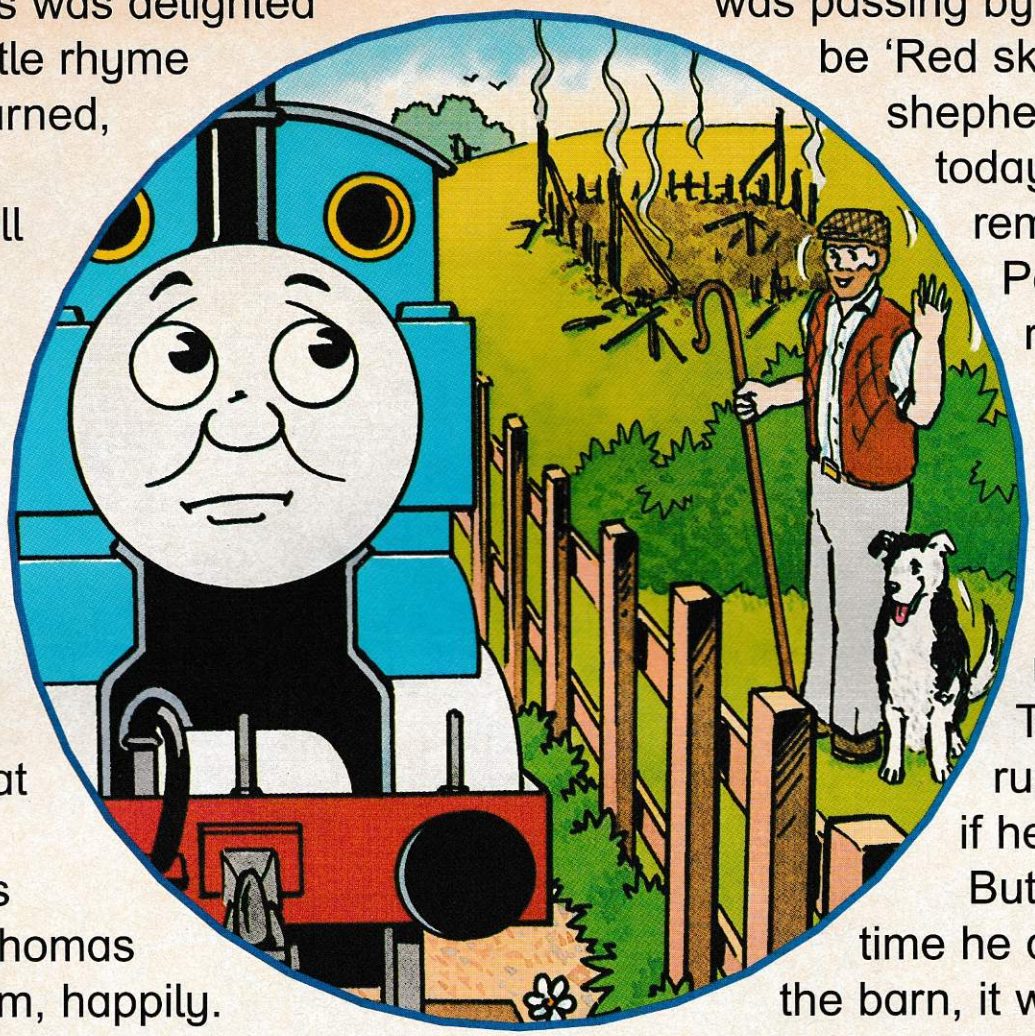
Red Sky at Night!

It was a warm, summer evening and Thomas was puffing happily along through the countryside. One of his favourite trips was past pretty, Barleycorn Farm.

That evening, Thomas was pleased because he met his old friend the shepherd. He was sitting on the old stone wall by the railway, watching the most beautiful, rosy coloured sunset you have ever seen. "Red sky at night, shepherd's delight!" said the old man. Thomas was puzzled. "What do you mean?" asked the little tank engine. "It's an old saying," explained the shepherd. "When the sky is red, it means that tomorrow will be a lovely day! So a red sky always spells delight for us shepherds, who have to be out in the fields all day!" "And does the rhyme always come true?" asked Thomas. "Always!" grinned the old man, setting off home for his supper.



Thomas was delighted with the little rhyme he had learned, and kept saying it all the way home. "Hello, Thomas!" smiled Percy, back at the Main Station. "Red sky at night, shepherd's delight!" Thomas greeted him, happily.



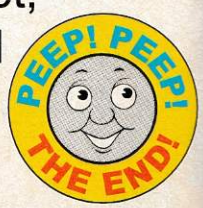
Then he told his friend all about it. That night Thomas could hardly sleep. He was waiting to see if the next day would be sunny, like the rhyme said.

Sure enough, it was! Thomas had a hot, busy day, carrying holiday-makers backwards and forwards to the beach in the summer sun. He didn't have time to think about his friend, the shepherd, until that evening.

Thomas was coming round the hill, towards the farm, when he saw a red glow in the sky. But this wasn't the glow of sunset. It came with black streaks of cloud and a smell of smoke!

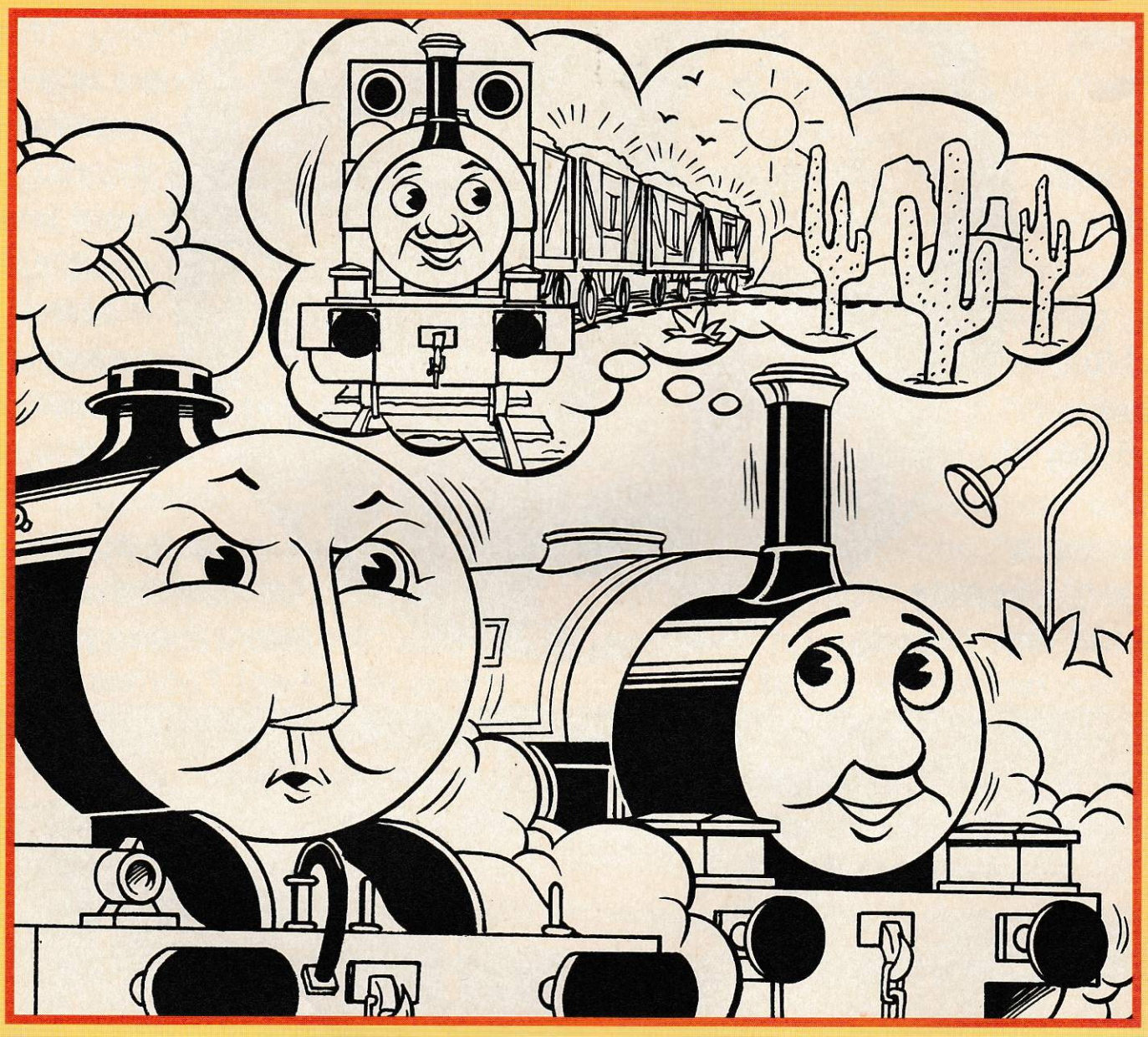
Just at that moment, Percy was passing by. "It won't be 'Red sky at night, shepherds delight' today," remarked Percy, "this red sky is because the old barn has caught fire! It'll be ruined!" Thomas rushed to see if he could help. But, by the time he arrived at the barn, it was just a heap of ashes! Thomas felt sorry for the shepherd. "Oh dear, it's a terrible shame!" said Thomas. "Your barn has been burnt to the ground!" "Shame? Fiddlesticks!" replied the jolly shepherd. "I was going to pull that old barn down anyway to make room to build a new one. That fire has saved me a lot of hard work. I couldn't be more pleased." He winked at Thomas. "It's as I said...Red sky at night, shepherd's delight!"

Thomas laughed. He was glad his old friend wasn't upset, and he was also pleased that the rhyme had once again come true!



A read & colour story

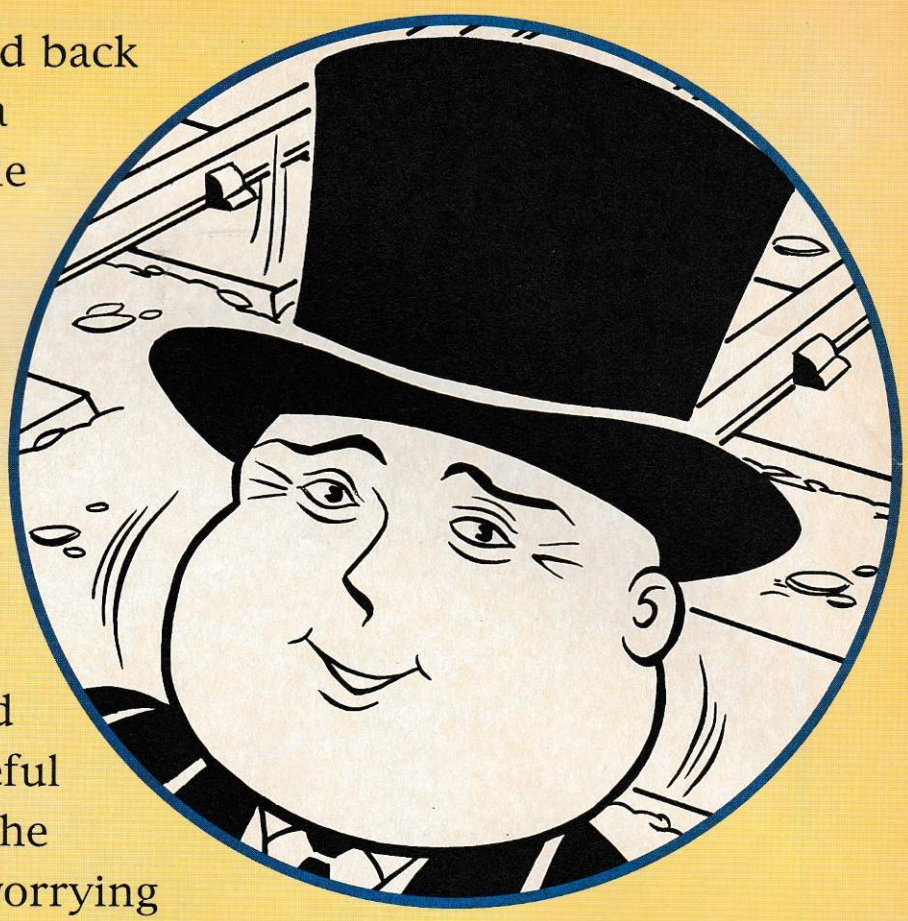
Silly Skarloey!



1 Skarloey is a young engine, who hates doing boring jobs like shunting trucks all day! One morning he moaned about it so much, Gordon became fed up with him. "Imagine you're doing something more interesting!" he suggested. And that's what he did! Skarloey imagined he was in the Wild West guarding trucks of gold dust. Life was much more exciting! He could imagine all kinds of exciting and amazing adventures for himself and he would never feel bored now! He couldn't wait until his next job!

2 Later, Skarloey was taking passengers to and from Wellsworth. "Slow down for goodness sake!" shouted his driver. "I can't!" panted Skarloey. "I'm being chased by a pack of Red Indians!" And in his imagination, he was!

3 Later, Skarloey limped back to the Main Station with a faulty piston. "Any trouble today Skarloey?" asked the Fat Controller. "Only a spot of bother with some grizzly bears," replied the engine, getting carried away with his imagination. "Now, now," said the Fat Controller, who had heard about his stories. "Be careful what you say in front of the passengers. We can't be worrying them with Red Indians and grizzly bears!"



4 The next day Skarloey was waiting to leave Wellsworth Station, when a party of school children held him up. The teacher was trying to get all of the children onto the train. "Now, come on," she said, "form a crocodile!" This is what teachers say when they want children to form a straight line. Skarloey was curious "What's the big hold up?" he asked.

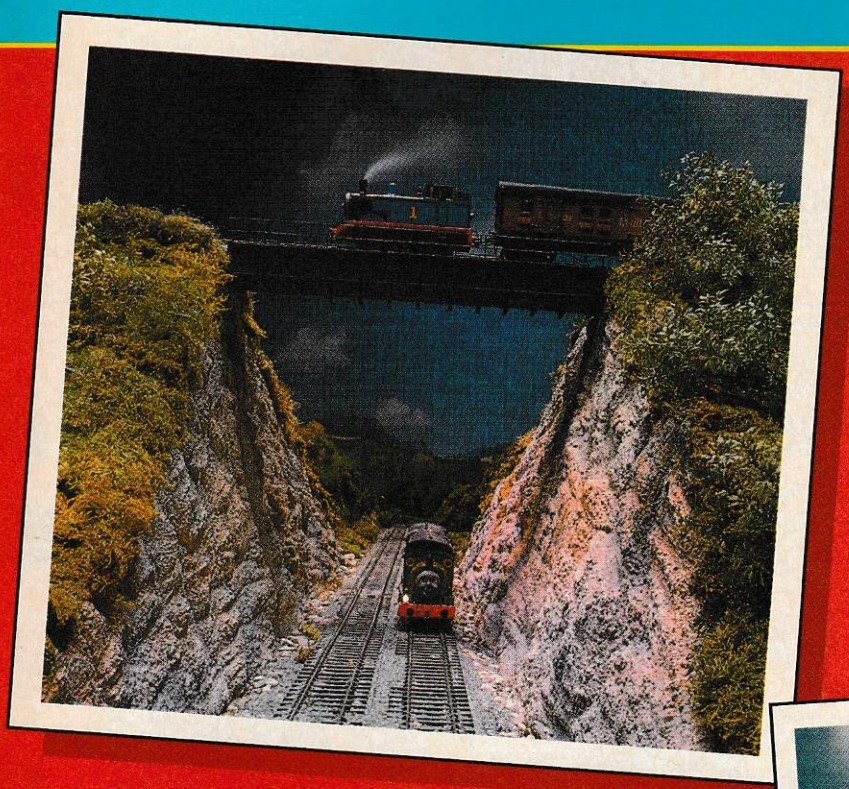
5 "Poor Miss Brown is having trouble getting her children to form a crocodile!" explained his driver. When Skarloey had finally taken the children back to the Main Station, the Fat Controller asked about the delay. "Bit of crocodile trouble," replied Skarloey. "That's enough of your stories," said the Fat Controller. "But it's true!" said Skarloey. "Miss Brown had some trouble getting her children into a crocodile!" "Well I never!" gasped the Fat Controller. The driver came over to explain about Miss Brown and her children. The Fat Controller laughed. "Sorry Skarloey! I thought you were telling stories again!

The end

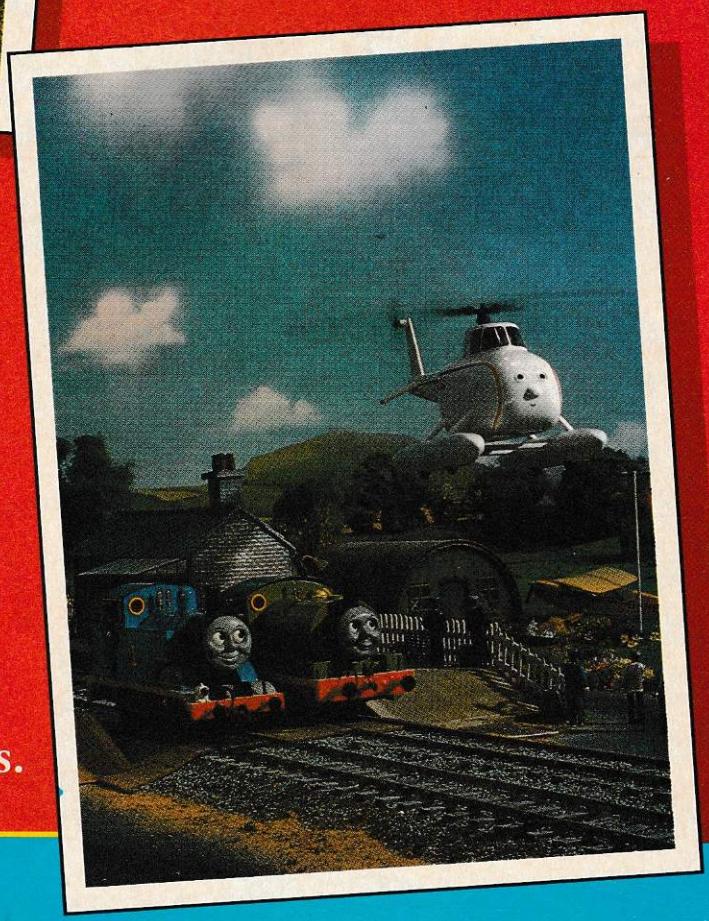
Thomas, Percy and the Post Train.

Based on *The Railway Series* by the Rev W Awdry.

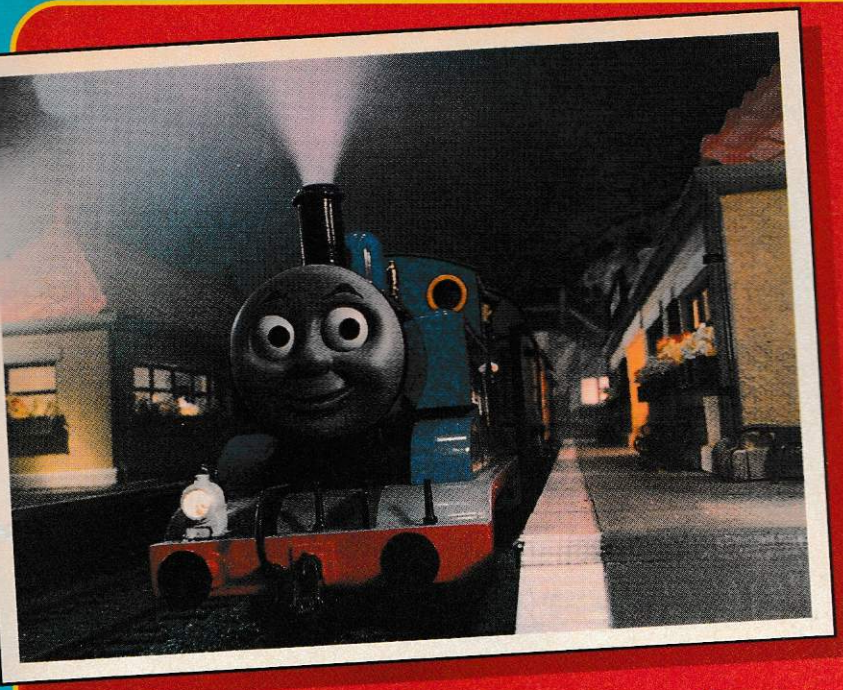
At night, when the other engines are tucked away in their sheds, you can hear the faraway call of an engine's whistle and the clickety-clack of train wheels turning. This is the sound of the post train.



1 The trains are pulled by Thomas and Percy, as the loads are too heavy for one engine. One night Percy was waiting at the junction. The main line train was late as the mail boat had been delayed. This meant that he had to make up for lost time.

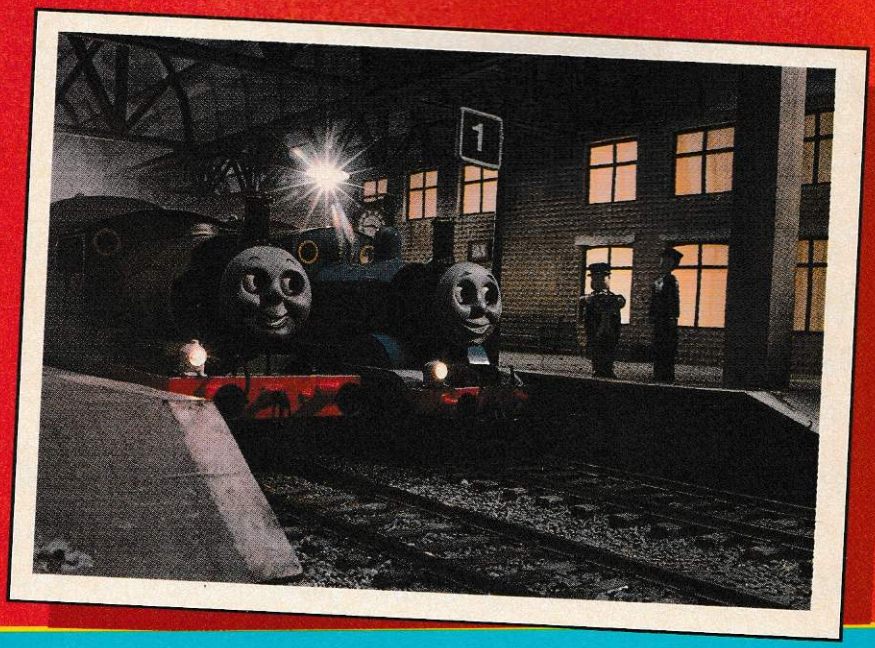


2 As Percy puffed along, the sun started to rise! He was very late! That night, Thomas told Percy that the man in charge of the post wasn't happy and they'd have to work faster tonight. Just then, Harold whirred overhead. "They might use me instead," he said, "wings work wonders you know!" "Rubbish," huffed Thomas.



3 That night, everything ran like clockwork. They even had time to pick up a man who had missed his train. The next afternoon, Percy passed the airfield and saw Harold. "Hello, Lazywings. Are you too tired to fly today?" "The wind's too strong. I've been grounded," grumbled Harold.

4 "You need rails," laughed Percy. "They work wonders, you know - always!" Later, the Fat Controller showed them a letter from the man who'd missed his train. "He thinks you are splendid," he said. "The post train is the pride of the line!"



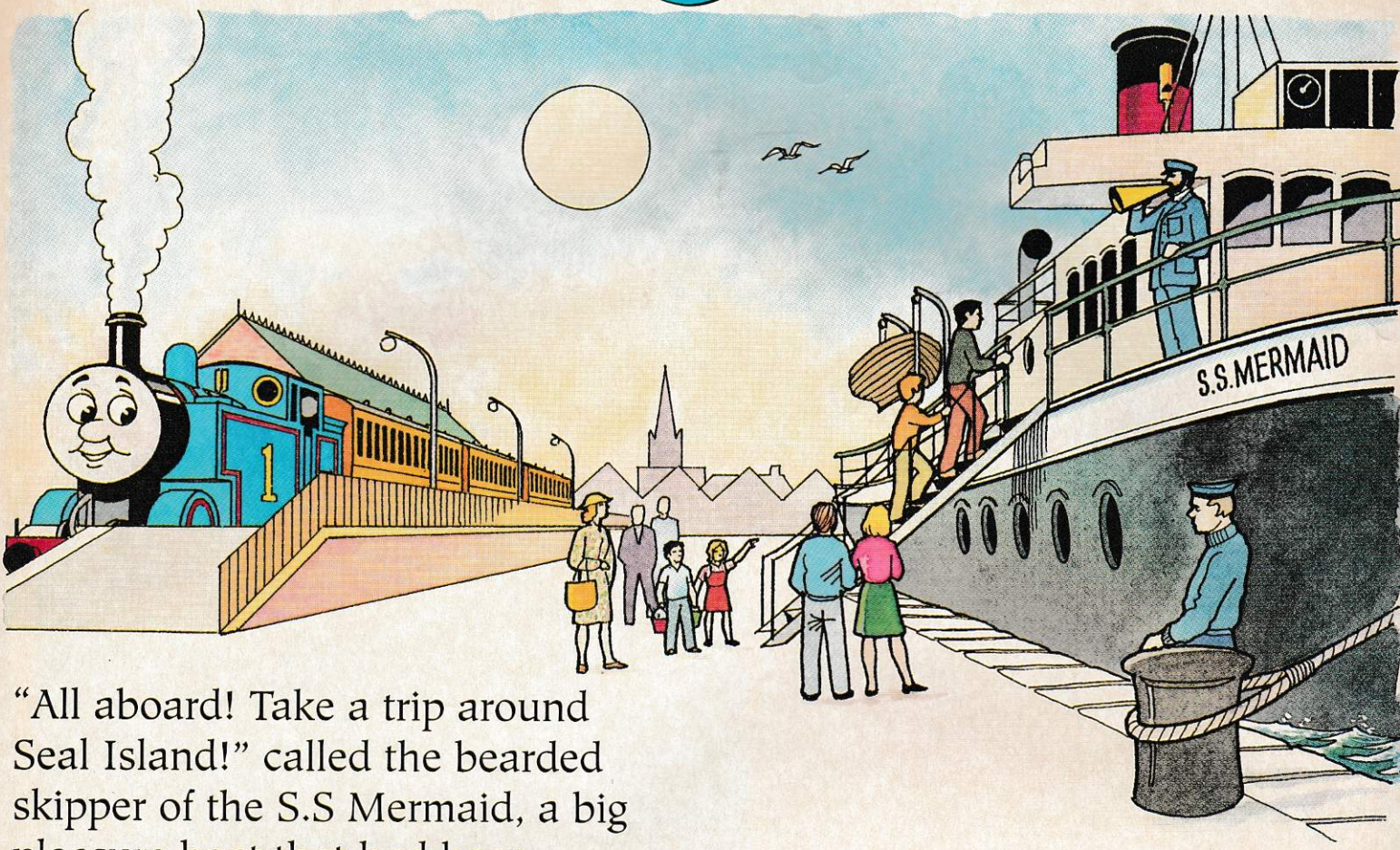
In Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends next time, you can read all about Percy and his special promise!

Win a model of Thomas!

Five lucky winners can win a splendid model of Thomas from the ERTL engine range! Just send a postcard, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/254 model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

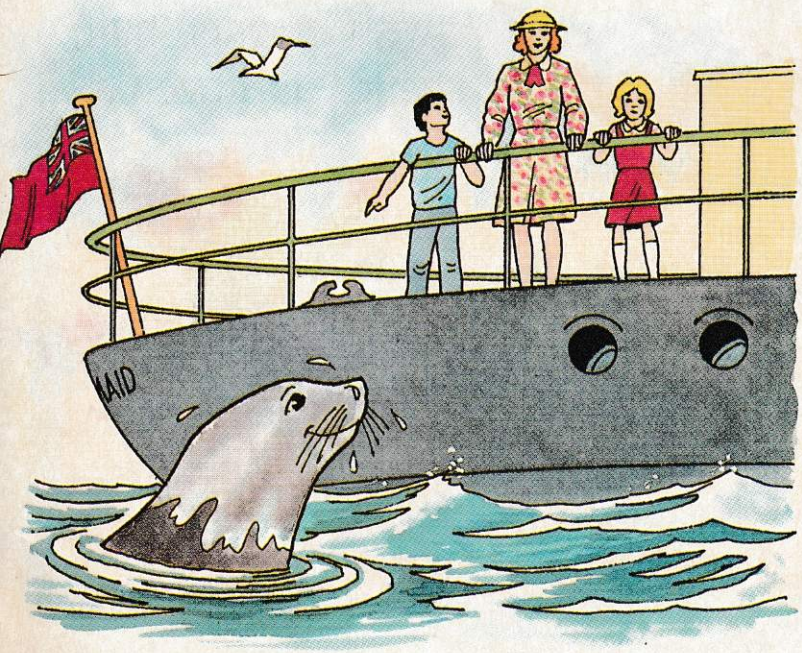
Closing date: July 16th, 1997.

Bobbing about!



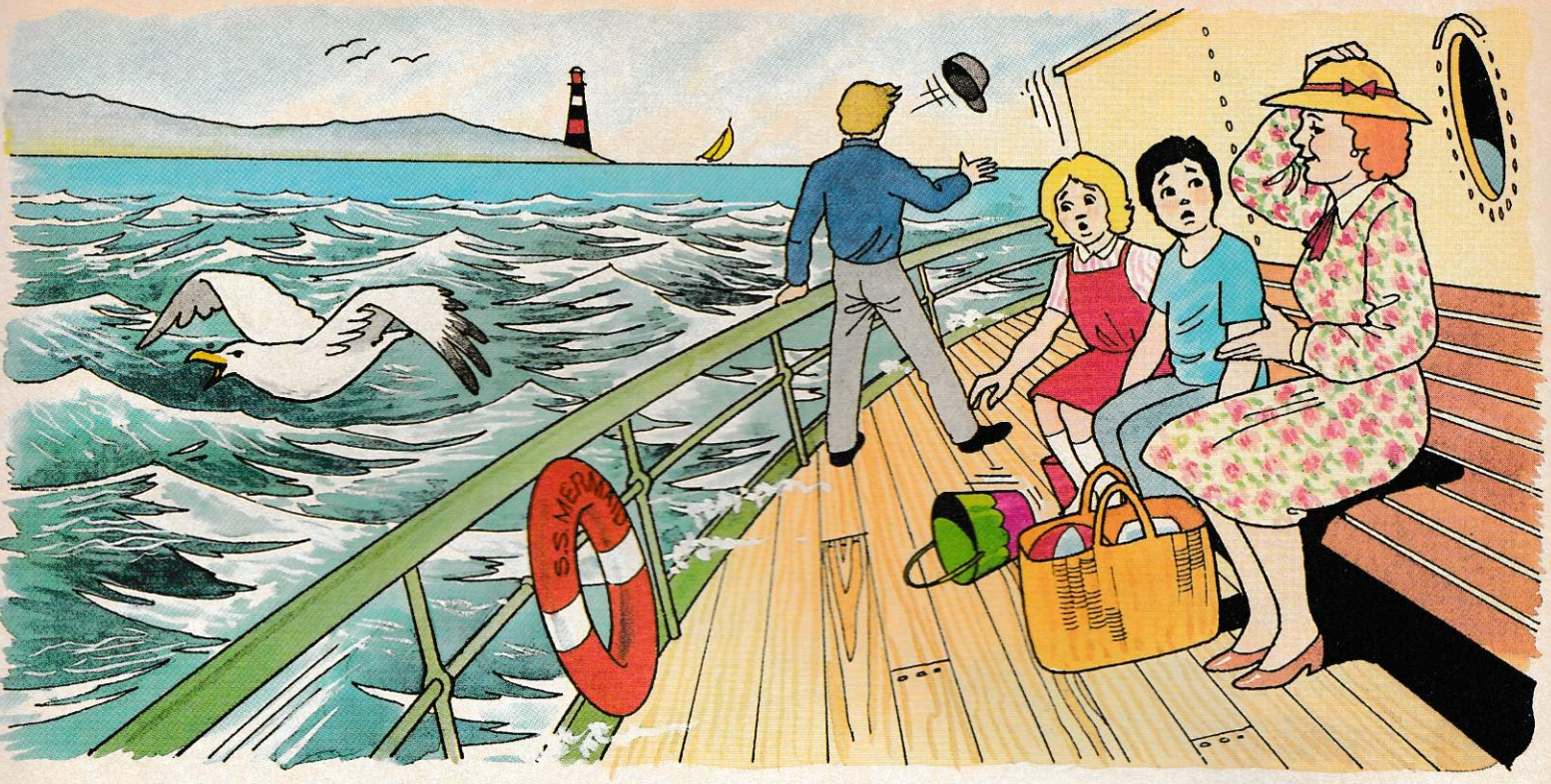
"All aboard! Take a trip around Seal Island!" called the bearded skipper of the S.S Mermaid, a big pleasure boat that had been moored by the pier.

Its smoking funnel reminded Stephen and Bridget of a puffing steam engine. Thomas had just brought them to the seaside, with Lady Hatt. It was a lovely, sunny day and the children had taken their buckets and spades with them. "Oh, please can we go for a boat trip, grandma?" cried Bridget, eagerly. "It sounds very exciting!" "Especially if we can see some seals," added Stephen.



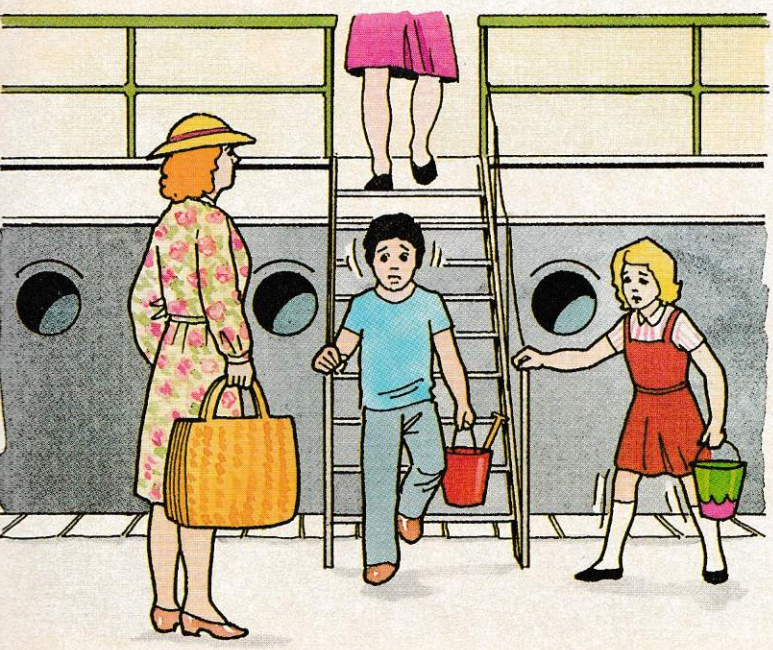
Lady Hatt happily agreed so all three of them hurried to join the queue of passengers waiting to board the boat.

When everyone was on board, it set out towards the island. "The boat won't go too near in case it disturbs the seals," Lady Hatt told them. "Look! There's one now in the water!" cried Stephen. "I think it's come to say hello."



It was a long trip. Further out to sea, it became quite windy. The waves were bigger with great, foaming white crests. The boat began to bob about. "Don't worry," Lady Hatt told her grandchildren. "It's perfectly safe. You'll soon get used to it."

But Stephen and Bridget felt very strange whenever the boat went up and down and rolled from side to side. The children enjoyed watching the seals but they were pleased to get back on dry land again.



When they finally stepped ashore, it seemed to go up and down for a moment, too. "Ooh! I feel dizzy!" said Stephen. "Me, too," replied his sister.

The children spent the rest of the day on the beach. They paddled, played with a beach ball, then built sandcastles and even a sand engine!

At last, Lady Hatt told them it was time to go home. PEEP! PEEP! Stephen and Bridget heard Thomas whistling loudly, as he returned, pulling the tea-time passenger train.

At the seaside station, they told his driver all about their boat trip. Thomas overheard. "I'm glad

engines don't bob about, like boats!" said Stephen.

But, on the way back, there was a broken rail. Thomas had to go around it on an old loopline that was hardly ever used. It needed some repairs so Thomas puffed along very slowly. The track was bouncy where the big, wooden sleepers had become loose.

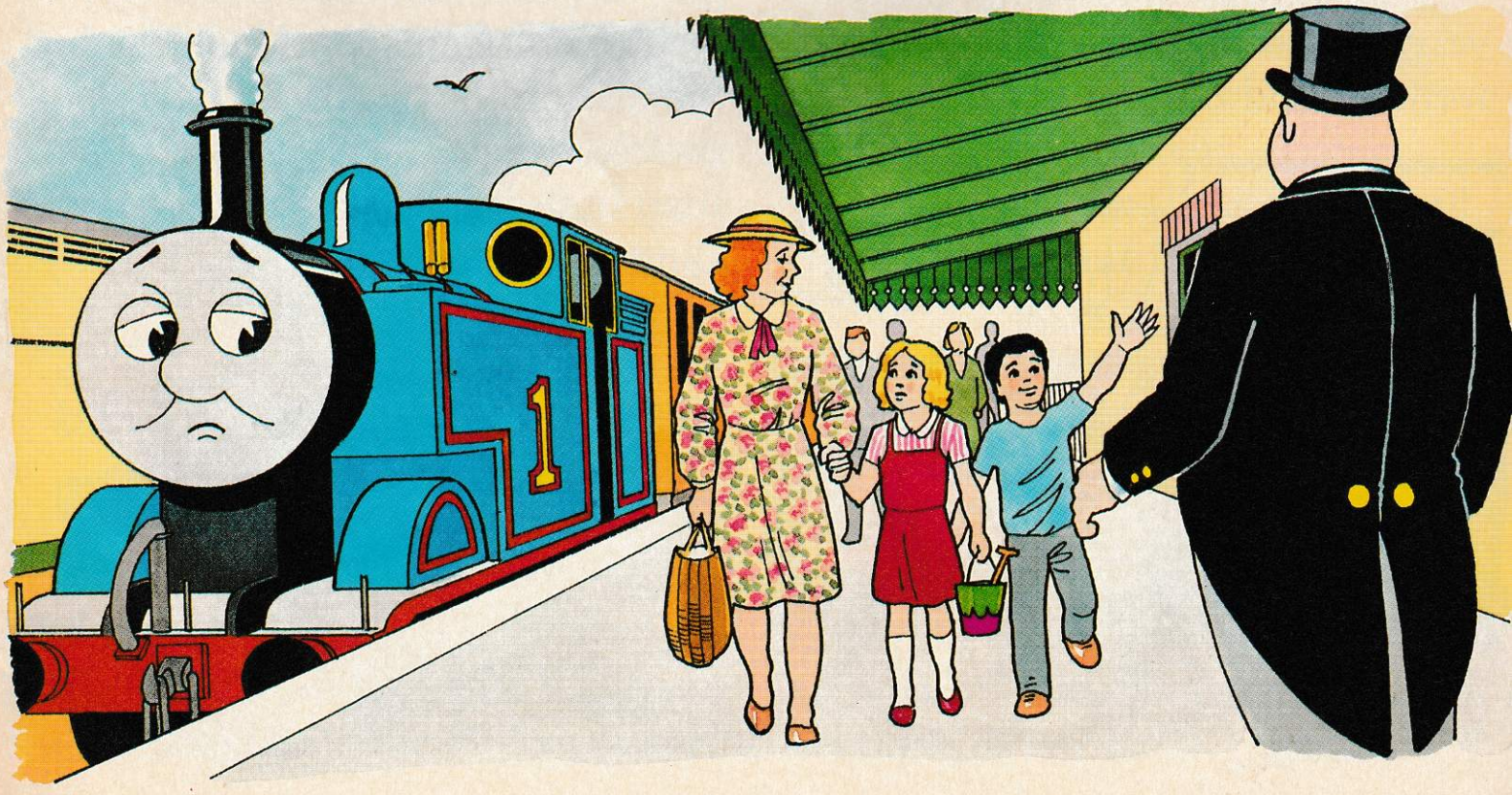
Thomas did his best to go smoothly. He didn't want his passengers to be uncomfortable.

But, however hard he tried, Thomas couldn't help rocking to and fro. Annie and Clarabel, swayed from side to side. Stephen, Bridget and Lady Hatt bounced up and down on Annie's springy seats.

At last, Thomas arrived at the Main Station. The Fat Controller apologised to all the passengers for Thomas' late arrival.

Stephen and Bridget stepped down on to the platform. "Oh dear," began Stephen, dizzily. "I don't think I will get used to all that bobbing about." His Grandmother laughed. "Well, I feel better," smiled Bridget, "thanks to Thomas, that train trip was *worse* than being at sea!"

THE END



Dot to dot!

What do the children eat as a yummy, summer treat?

When you have finished colour this page!

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Competition fun!

We have 25 fabulous giveaways!

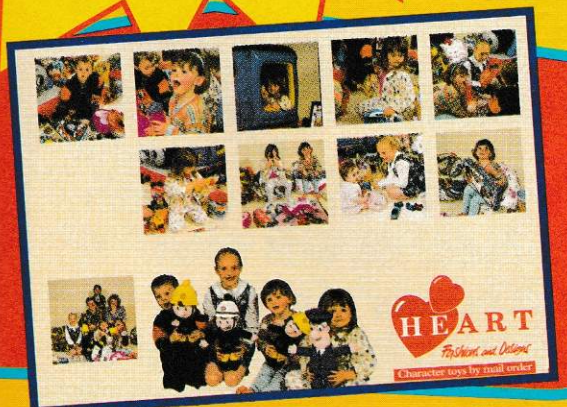
Get warm & dry with a cuddly Thomas towel!

To win a towel, tell us: What is the name of the only red engine?

Send your answer, along with your name & address, to: Thomas towel competition, Heart Fashions and Designs, 37a High Street, Walsall Wood, W Midlands, WS9 9LR.

All entries must be received by 16th July 1997.

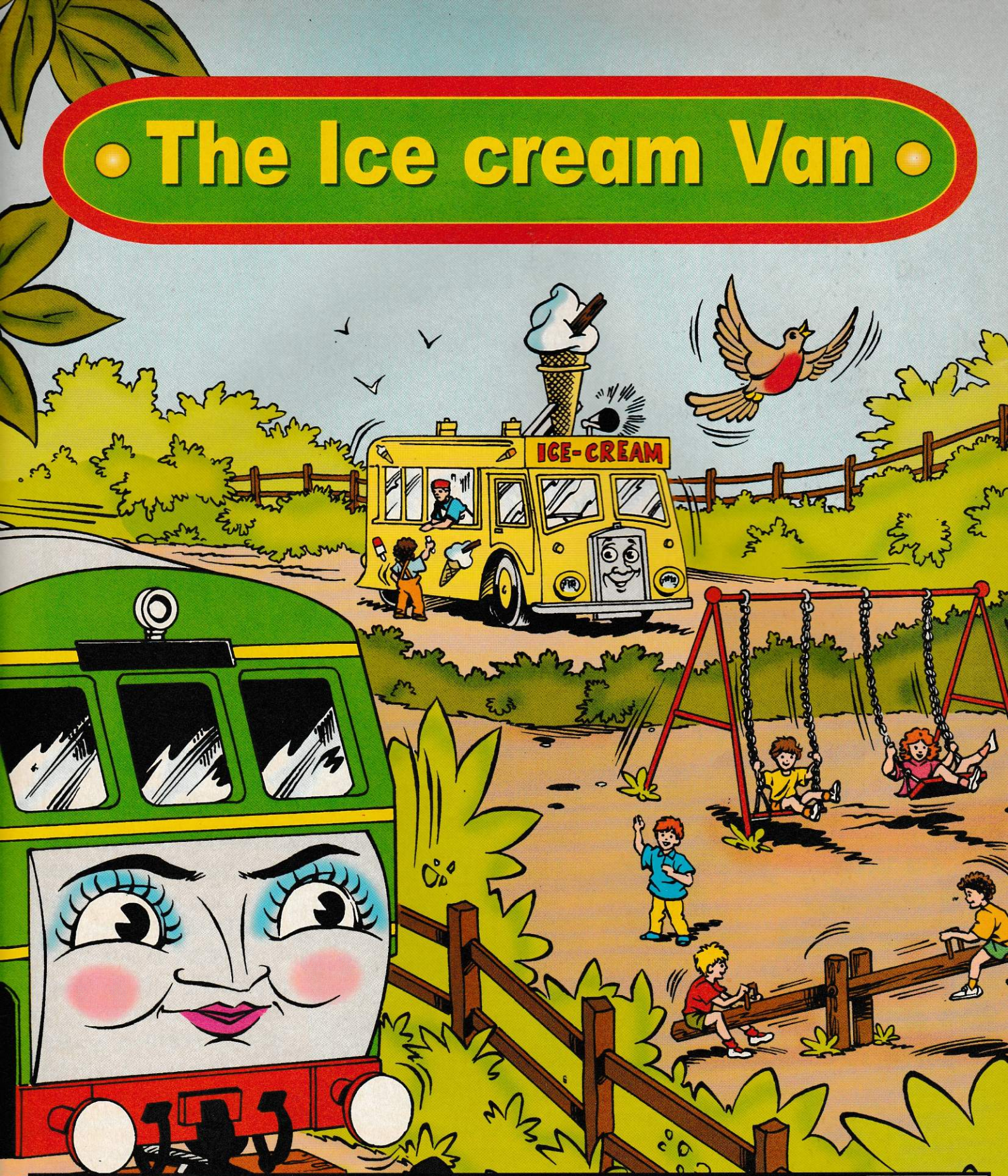
Readers can purchase this excellent towel from Heart at only £7.99 including p & p. Simply contact Heart at the above address quoting this issue number.



Heart Fashions and Designs stock over 150 Thomas products in their mail order catalogue. For your FREE copy, telephone 01543 377182, quoting reference 254, or write to them at the competition address above.

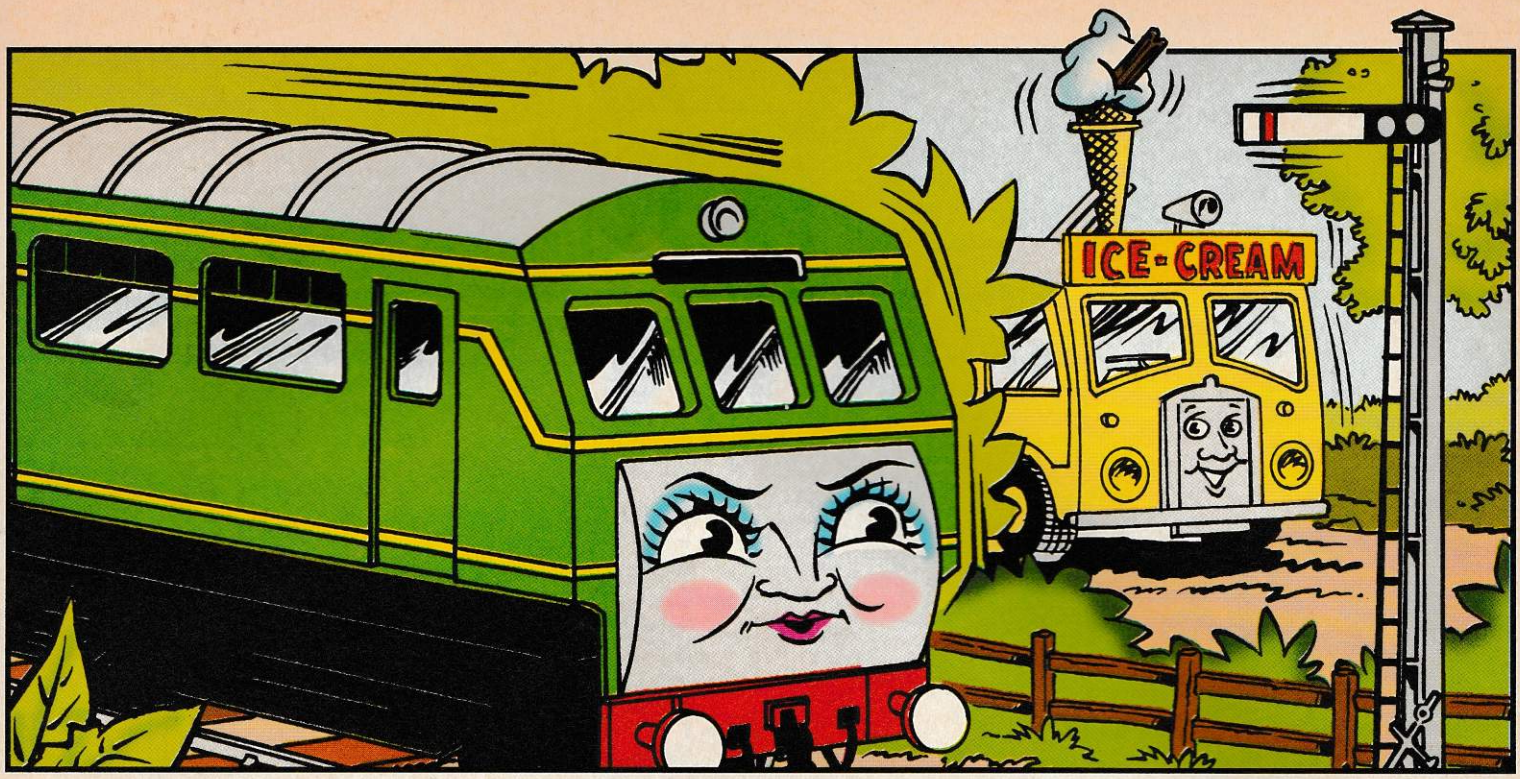
This competition is open to all readers other than employees and their families of participating companies. We cannot accept any responsibility for prizes lost or damaged in the post. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.

The Ice cream Van



1. One sunny morning, Daisy was travelling slowly when she saw some children having fun in a playground. "I like watching the children play, they make me laugh!"

2. Then Daisy heard a happy tune and saw that a grinning ice-cream van had arrived. He was soon surrounded by lots of children! "I'll never be that popular!" she sighed.



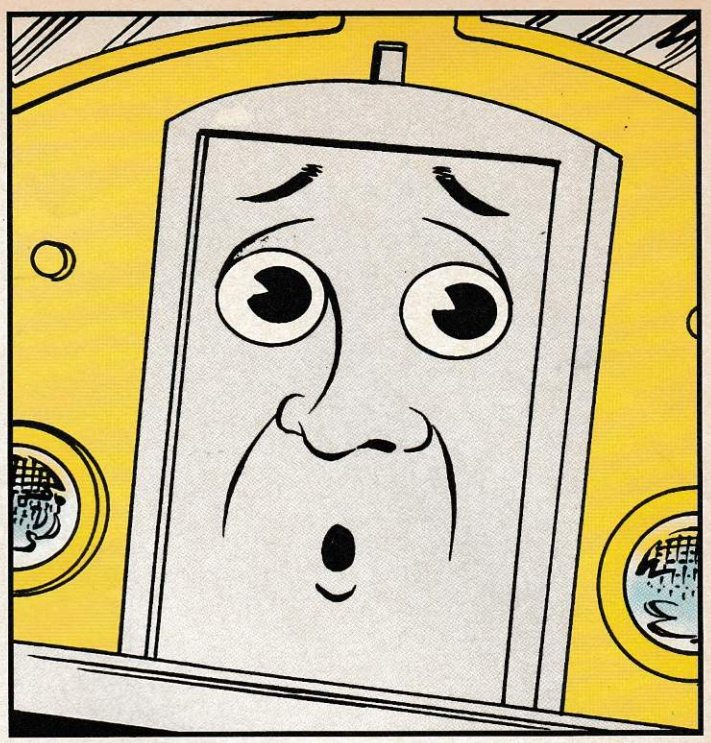
3. Later that morning, Daisy was waiting at a signal when she saw the ice-cream van again. "Why are you so popular with the children. What's your secret?" she called.

4. "It's my ice-cream, you silly diesel!" laughed the ice-cream van. Daisy didn't like being called silly. "You and your silly tune, at least I'm doing something useful!" she replied.

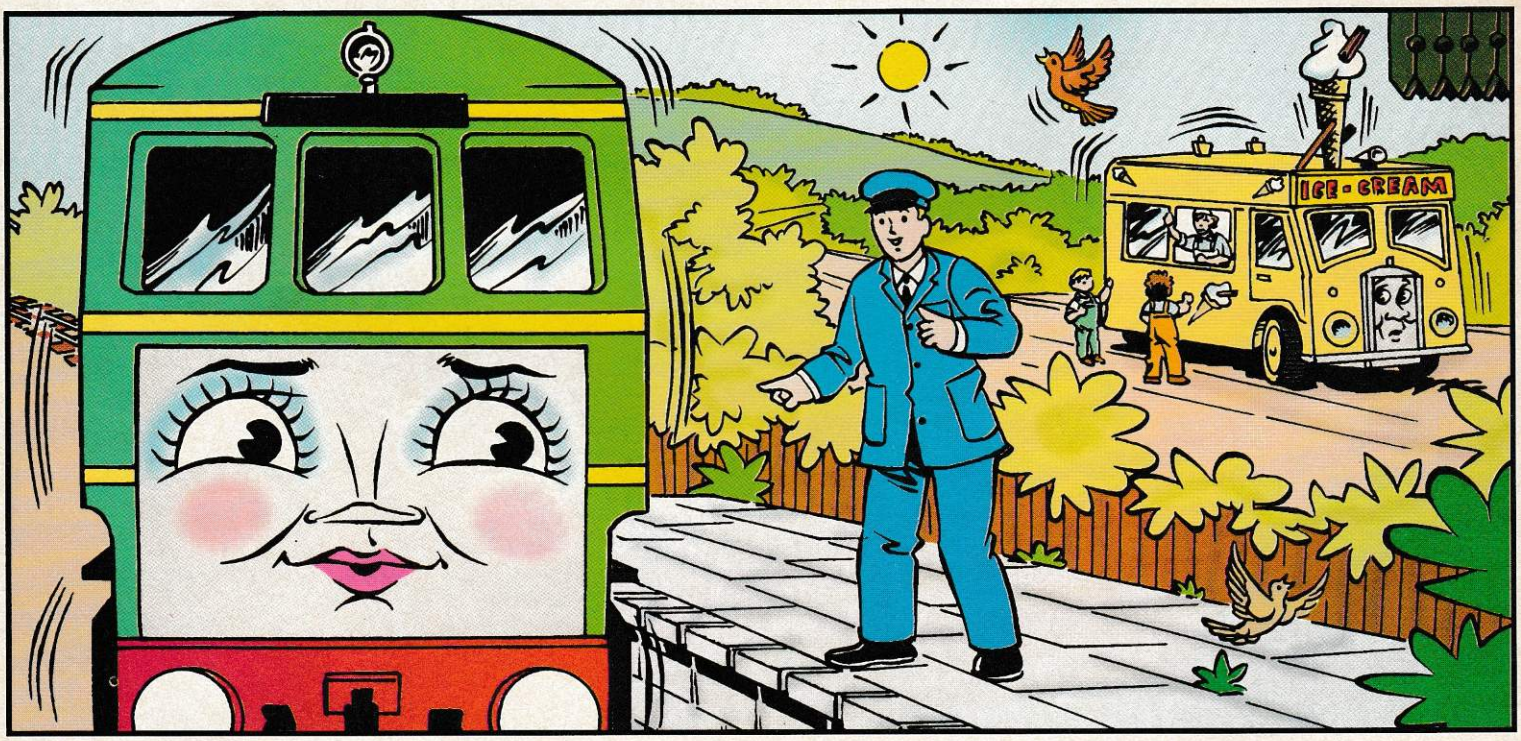
5. "Now, now, Daisy!" said her driver. "You'd have lots of children around you too, if you sold ice-cream!" Daisy was still a little angry. "Oh, I suppose so!" she muttered.

6. Soon, at a village station, Daisy heard the ice-cream van's tune once more. "Oh no! Not you again!" she snorted. Then some children came running up to buy ice creams.

7. But something was wrong. The ice-cream van wasn't grinning anymore. "It's a disaster, we've run out of fuel and all the ice-cream is going to melt!" shouted the driver.



8. "We need diesel fuel for the ice-cream machine!" wailed the ice-cream van. "Serves you right for being rude! Let's see how popular you are now!" said Daisy, unkindly.

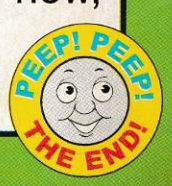


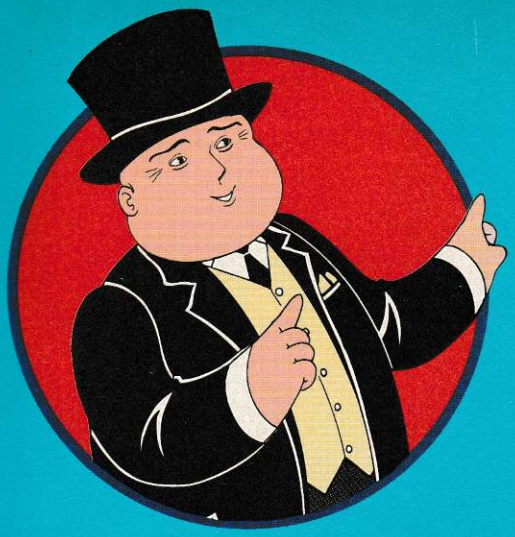
9. Daisy's driver wasn't pleased. "You mustn't be jealous because someone else is popular!" he said. "Besides, you don't want the children to miss their ice-creams, do you!"

10. Daisy thought about what her driver had said and realised she hadn't been very friendly. "I'm very sorry!" she said, to the sad ice-cream van. "What can we do to help?"

11. "Don't worry!" exclaimed Daisy's driver. "We always carry a spare can of diesel fuel, in case of an emergency!" The ice-cream van suddenly brightened up. "Oh, this really is an emergency!" he called. So, Daisy's driver fetched the diesel fuel from the guards van and gave it to the driver of the ice-cream van. "Let's just say it's a present from Daisy!" he smiled.

12. The ice-cream van was soon working again, and the happy children went over to Daisy to say thank you. Daisy grinned. "I'm sorry for being so grumpy, I was just jealous of you being so popular!" she said. The ice-cream van smiled. "Good old Daisy, you've saved the day. You're popular now, as well!" Then he played his happy tune once more!





The m

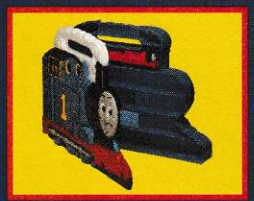
Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

Star Letter

Dear Fat Controller,
Who is your favourite engine?

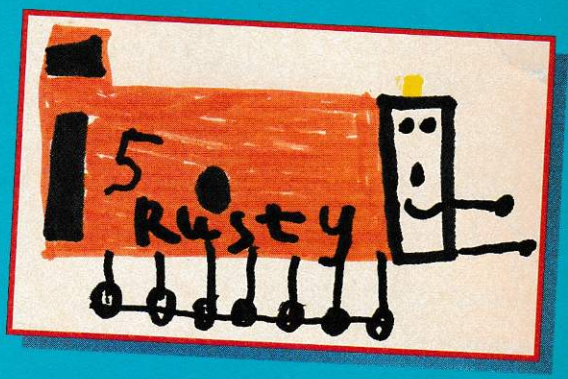
From Shuaib Ali Baig, aged 4.

I had to think long and hard about this one, and do you know what, I think I like them all the same! Every engine is quite different, but they're all very special indeed!



The sender of any letter that is printed as our STAR LETTER will win a splendid Thomas carry case!

Hello, here's Rusty racing along, by Drew Mason, aged 7!



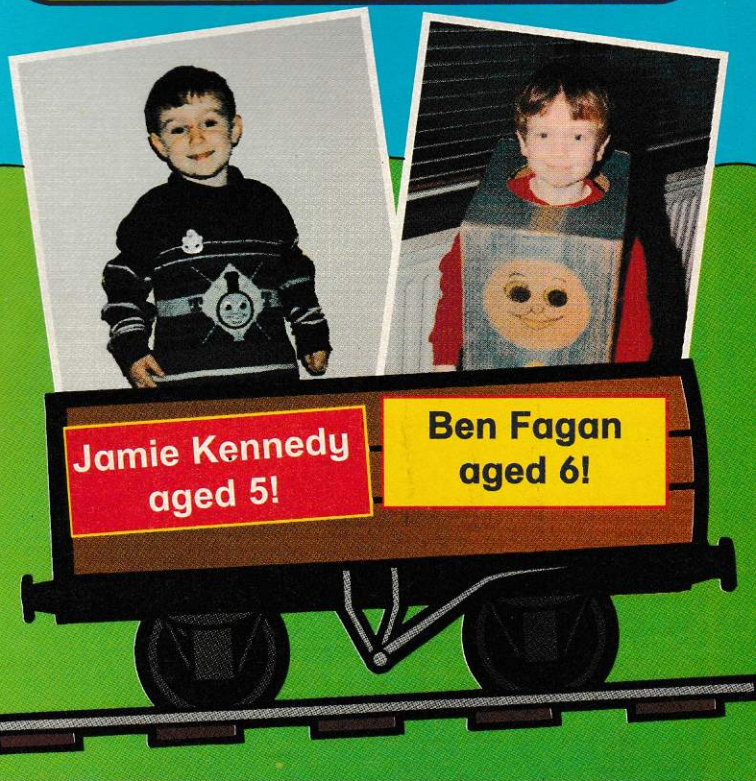
Prize Poem!

I like this poem by David Cledwyn, aged 4, and I'm sure Percy will too!

Percy's green,
Percy's small,
But to me,
He's best of all!

Happy Birthday

TO: Samuel Davies, aged 3,
Craig Boggon, aged 4,
Max Mackenzie, aged 3,
Jaikistiam Athi, aged 6,
Benjamin Cartlidge, aged 3
& Alexander Antrobus,
aged 1.



ail train!

Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a set of special Thomas Glitter Stickers.

Peep! Peep! Thomas is smiling away in this super picture by Sam Young, aged 5!

Culdee is having a very busy day by Kane Valdes, aged 5!

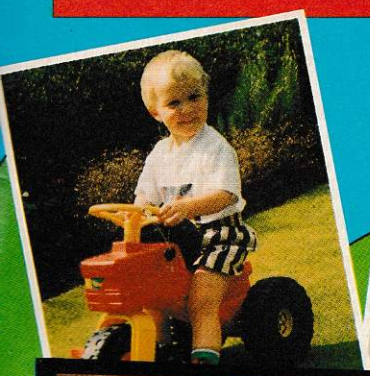
Percy's Jokes!

Have you got a favourite joke or funny story? Why not send it to Percy?

What sound does a cat make when it's driving along the road?
Neeeoooww!
Samson Cheng, aged 7!

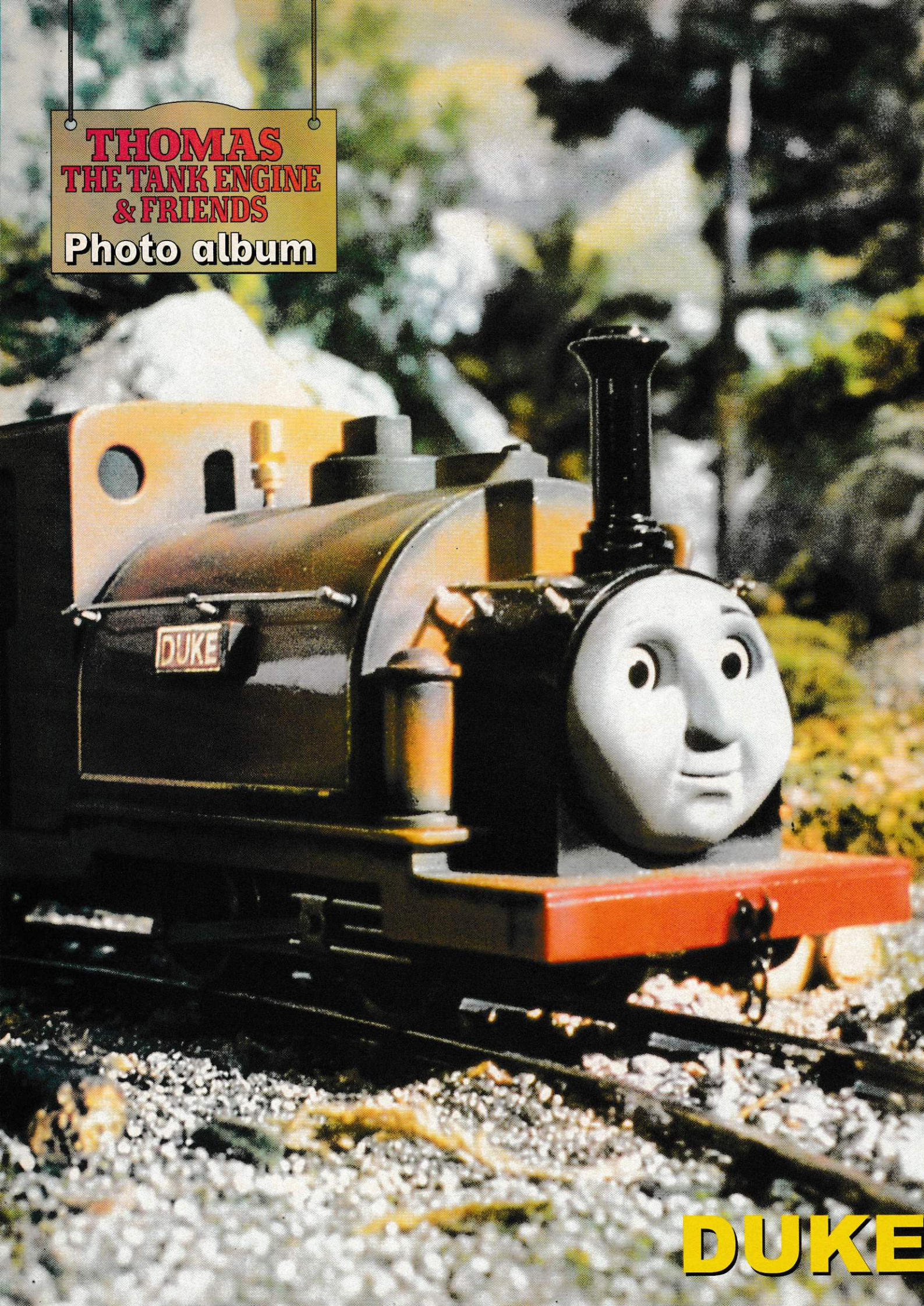
Where does a baby monkey sleep?
In an apricot!
Carl Brooks, aged 3!

What's short, green & goes camping?
A boy sprout!
Oliver Beeston, aged 5!



Daniel James aged 3!

Aaron Wigman aged 3!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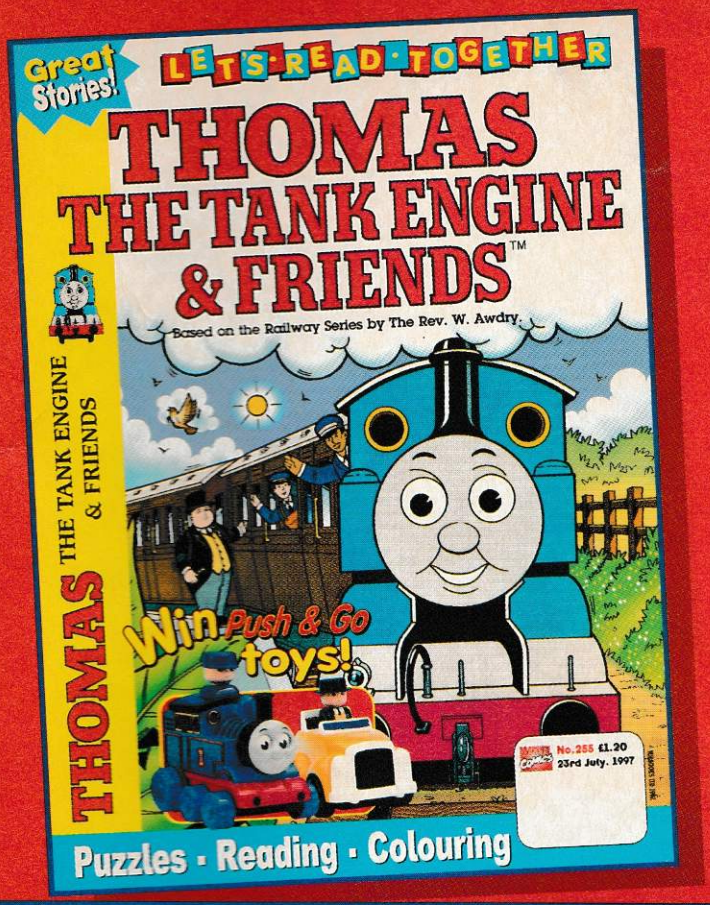
THE TANK ENGINE
& FRIENDS
Photo album
DUKE
DUKE

In issue 255 of . . .



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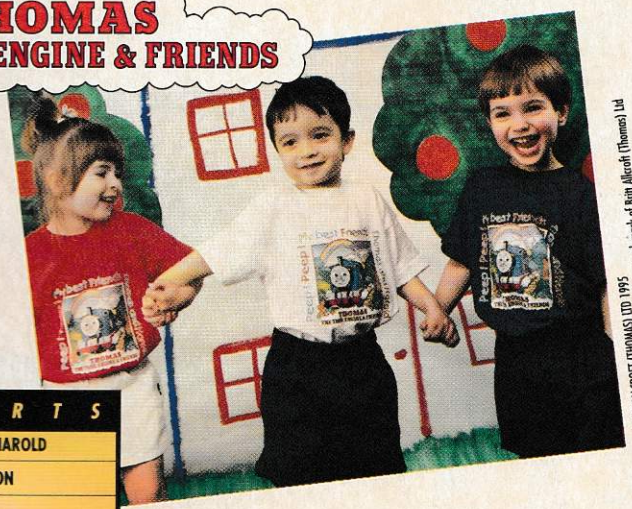

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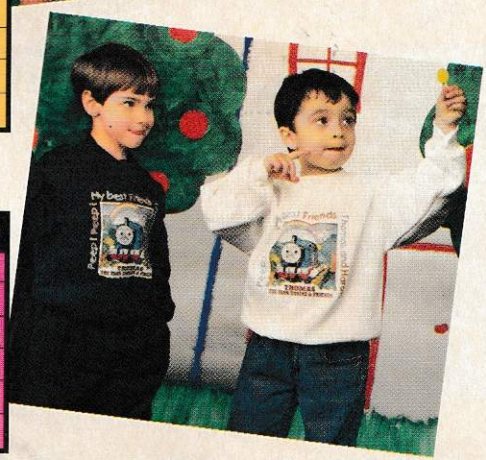

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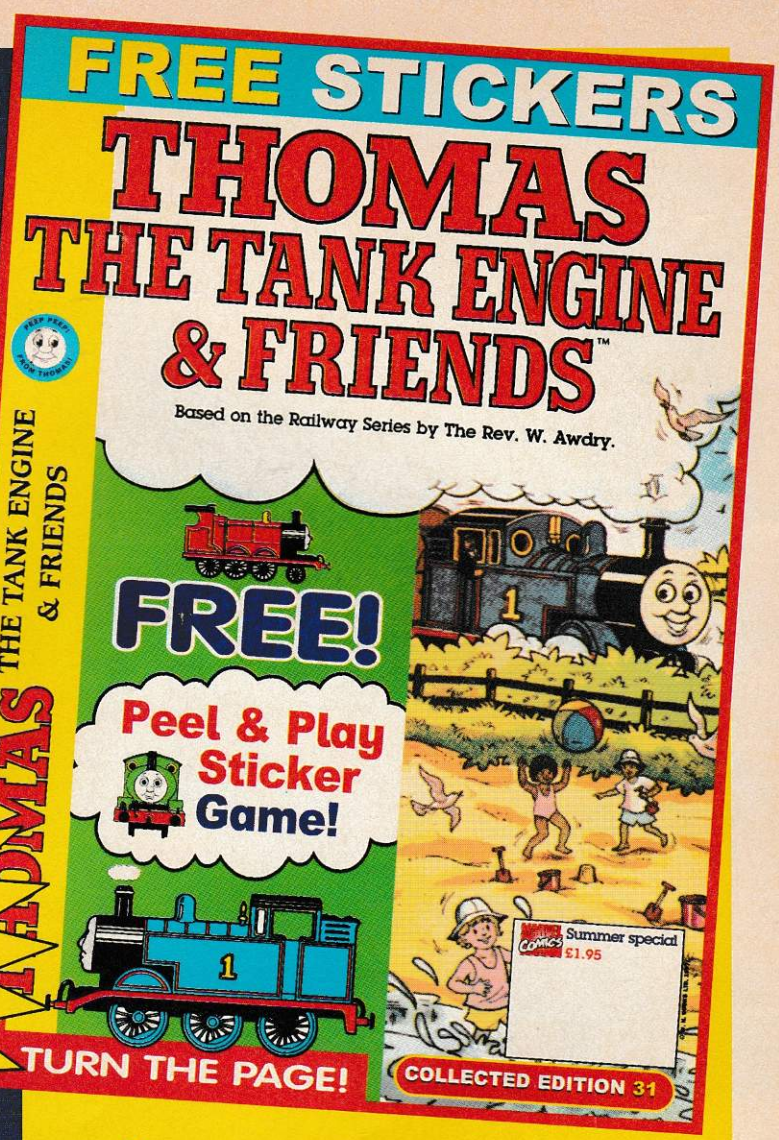

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